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29 April 1966

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Science and Technology

ATTENTION :

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SUBJECT : Comments on New York Times Article

Attached are OSA comments on the article concerning CIA which appeared in the New York Times on 27 April 1966. These comments have been addressed only to those statements related to U-2 operations. The TCO, CIA, has prepared a similar paper dealing with references to satellite reconnaissance and it is presumed that the DDI will comment on references to substantive intelligence derived from U-2 or satellite operations.

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JACK C. LEDFORD
Brigadier General, USAF
Director of Special Activities

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STATEMENT: "When it presented the U-2 program in 1956, fear of detection and diplomatic repercussions led the Eisenhower Administration to run some "practice" missions over Eastern Europe. The first mission to the Soviet Union in mid-1956, over Moscow and Leningrad, was detected but not molested. It did, however, draw the first of a number of secret diplomatic protests."

COMMENT: Substantially true. Three missions were flown over Eastern Europe prior to the first penetration of the Soviet Union. The fourth mission overflew Leningrad but not Moscow. The fifth mission, on the following day, overflew Moscow. Subsequently, a protest was lodged by the Soviet Union but it was made publicly and not secretly. A second protest by the Soviets in March of 1958 was made secretly through diplomatic channels. No damage to CIA interests is anticipated.

STATEMENT: "After six missions the Administration halted the flights but the CIA pressed for their resumption. Doubts were finally overcome, and 20 to 25 more flights were conducted with Soviet fighter planes in vain pursuit of at least some of them."

COMMENT: Substantially true. After the initial Soviet protest, U-2 flights were temporarily suspended. Subsequently some 33 additional U-2 overflights of the Soviet Union were made. To the best of our knowledge, the number of U-2 overflights of the USSR has never previously been published. Although the number stated (20 to 25) is not exact, it is close enough to suggest it is something more than just speculation. The above disclosures, however, should result in little damage to CIA interests.

STATEMENT: "The Powers plane is thought to have been crippled by the nearby explosion of an antiaircraft missile developed with the U-2's in mind."

COMMENT: True. This fact has been widely publicized and virtually confirmed by Powers' own public statement before the Senate Armed Forces Committee. No damage to CIA interests.